

for former soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines who risked their lives to protect our freedoms and this legislation is another step towards meeting that sacred obligation.

The inclusion of \$417 million for VA medical care is a responsible and absolutely necessary action that this Congress must take. Again, I want to commend Chairman YOUNG, and Subcommittee Chairman WALSH, for once again demonstrating their commitment to America's veterans.

2002 SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT FOR FURTHER RECOVERY FROM AND RESPONSE TO TERRORIST ATTACKS ON THE UNITED STATES

SPEECH OF

**HON. MAJOR R. OWENS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 23, 2002*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4775) making supplemental appropriations for further recovery from and response to terrorist attacks on the United States for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes!

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Chairman, all members of Congress were ready to debate and pass a supplemental budget in support of the war effort, and for other emergencies. We have been shocked by the addition of a section which raises the national debt ceiling by 750 billion dollars. This giant expenditure without debate is designed to protect the massive Republican tax cut for the rich. This legislation represents a gross abuse of power.

Mr. Chairman, this gross abuse of power must be challenged. The Republican juggernaut is out of control and they must be exposed in the eyes of the American people. Through an undemocratic, autocratic process under the camouflage of parliamentary tricks, the Republicans are staging an economic coup using a tax cut to permanently place the rewards of our economy in the hands of the corporate elite. The supplemental budget process is being abused to protect and enshrine the tax cut for the rich. It is a clear statement that the Republicans claim the nation's resources for the benefit of the rich alone.

Republicans are declaring, that the constitutional infrastructure established by the founding fathers and nurtured by succeeding generations belongs only to the rich elite. The Republicans are seizing for themselves alone all of the wealth that flows from American scientific and technological achievement; from military research and testing; from grants for domestic research. All the wounds and battlefield deaths of American heroes in all the wars are now deemed to be for the sake of only the rich. A massive tax cut for the rich accomplishes the clear purpose of leaving the treasury emptied of all funds that might be used for the benefit of the poorer ninety percent of the population. The Republican action makes more than 200 years of struggle for a more perfect union only for the comfort of the rich. By their actions related to the supplemental budget the Republicans confiscate America the Beautiful as America for the rich and pow-

erful. Will these same rich and powerful recipients of the tax cut volunteer for the front lines if the war against terrorism is prolonged and a draft becomes necessary? Will those who have the most to lose step forward or will the draft again be a vehicle which forces the sons of working families to die to preserve the comforts of the rich? The public must be fully made to understand the cynical, selfish, cold blooded posture of Republican policy. Republicans never voted for social security, medicare or medicaid. Republicans refuse to raise the minimum wage. Currently, as well as in the past, Republicans do not hide their plot to strip the Federal government of programs that benefit working families and the unfortunate poor. More than a decade ago David Stockman wrote a book outlining the plot that Ronald Reagan could not quite complete. With this stealth effort to raise the debt ceiling without debate, the scheme to kidnap the Treasury is given new life. Despite the extra expenditures for the war against terrorism, there would be no necessity to increase the debt ceiling by 750 billion dollars if the Republican tax cut for the rich had not been rammed through in the first year of this session of Congress. Every Democrat has a duty to sound the trumpet and spread the word that an economic takeover, a fiscal coup is underway that will rob our Nation and make it impossible to provide a prescription drug, benefit; increased funds for education and school construction; and adequate day care and children's programs. Every voter must understand that this defiant Democratic initiated debate on the eve of Memorial Day is a landmark battle for the people against the selfish few.

2002 SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT FOR FURTHER RECOVERY FROM AND RESPONSE TO TERRORIST ATTACKS ON THE UNITED STATES

SPEECH OF

**HON. GREGORY W. MEEKS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 23, 2002*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4775) making supplemental appropriations for further recovery from and response to terrorist attacks on the United States for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes:

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Mr. Chairman, I come to the floor tonight to voice my utter disgust for what we as Members of Congress, representatives of our great nation, have to do here tonight. We as representatives of our constituencies must voice that we will not stand by idly and let a few destroy everything America's workers have diligently worked for all their lives. Though we may not win this battle, which is rumored not to end until early in the morning, know that we, those who truly represent working Americans, will not stop fighting this legislative battle.

Over the last 15 months, we have experienced the worst fiscal reversal in our nation's history—with \$5 trillion in projected surpluses over the next 10 years having disappeared. Last year, it was projected that publicly-held

national debt would be completely paid off by 2008. And yet now, due largely to the economic plans put in place last year by the Bush Administration and Congressional Republicans, the publicly-held national debt is going up and not down. As a result, the country is now hitting the current statutory debt limit of \$5.95 trillion.

But some of us, those who continue to fight for American workers, children, and seniors saw this coming. In face of a deteriorating economic picture, Democrats pleaded for Republicans to join us at an economic summit so we could put our country back on the path to long-term economic growth and opportunity. Instead of working towards this goal, our attempts were dismissed and now we have experienced a dramatic reversal of continued prosperity, a dramatic reversal of a growing hope to increase education spending, a dramatic reversal of saving seniors from losing the money they put into social security, and a dramatic reversal of a decreased percentage of unemployed workers to a steadily increasing number of unemployed workers facing more hardships by the dozen.

Today, I stand here fighting a battle with my colleagues. A battle that calls for us to think twice about what we as a governing body will do if this legislation is passed. If the debt ceiling is raised we can no longer envision our plan to leave no child behind. We can no longer envision our plan to continuously provide social security to all of our seniors. We can no longer envision our plan to level off the current unemployment rates. The bottom line is that so much of what America stands for and yearns to become can be washed away with final passage of this supplemental appropriations bill that provides much more than what we can afford. We thought the tax cuts passed by the majority would slowly chip away at the American dream of so many, but we were in for such a surprise. Yes, there was much more in store. What was in store was this supplemental. Think about it. Think about the chipping away of our nation's future. Think about denying Americans what they deserve and have worked for all their lives. Think hard. Think if you want to take the blame for what will surely come. Once every Member in this governing body truly does this, each will know that we should not, cannot, and must not pass this legislation.

2002 SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT FOR FURTHER RECOVERY FROM AND RESPONSE TO TERRORIST ATTACKS ON THE UNITED STATES

SPEECH OF

**HON. JERROLD NADLER**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 23, 2002*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4775) making supplemental appropriations for further recovery from and response to terrorist attacks on the United States for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes:

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to thank the President, the Speaker, Chairman